

*What is claimed is:*

**CLAIMS**

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1. An apparatus for providing I/O access to at least one data storage device across a network, and the apparatus comprising:

a network module configured to couple to the network for sending and receiving data packets;

5 at least a first stage and a second stage serially coupling the network module to the at least one storage device; and

logic responsive to a received data packet from the network to serially move data from the received data packet from said network module through each of said first and said second stages to the at least one storage device, and the logic further  
10 responsive to a read request from the network to send a data packet to the network via said network module from whichever of said at least first and second stages and the at least one storage device includes the data.

2. The apparatus of Claim 1, with said logic further operative to coalesce received data packets corresponding with a single file or data stream in said first stage.  
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3. The apparatus of Claim 1, with said logic further operative to aggregate received data packets corresponding with a plurality of files or files in said second stage.  
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4. A method for providing I/O access to at least one data storage device across a network, and the method comprising the acts of:

coupling to the network for input and output of data;

coalescing data received from the network which corresponds with a selected  
25 file or data stream;

aggregating data from a plurality of selected files or files coalesced in said act of coalescing; and

storing said data aggregated in said act of aggregating.

